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SUBJECT: CCIT TOPS INDIA'S UNGA PRIORITY LIST: A/S
BRIMMER'S SEPTEMBER 23 MEETING WITH INDIAN JOINT SECRETARY
FOR UN POLITICAL AFFAIRS ASITH KUMAR BHATTACHARJEE

1. This is an action request. Please see para 6.

2. SUMMARY. A/S Brimmer met with Indian Joint Secretary for UN Political Affairs Asith Kumar Bhattacharjee on September 23 on the margins of the 64th UN General Assembly (UNGA). The discussion focused on India's UN priorities for the coming year, particularly passage of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, as well of India's experiences in peacekeeping. END SUMMARY.

3. At a meeting with IO Assistant Secretary Esther Brimmer, Indian Joint Secretary for UN Political Affairs Asith Kumar Bhattacharjee outlined India's top three UN priorities for the coming year, in the following order of importance: Passage of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT); UN Security Council (UNSC) reform; and development and improving the lives of people, calling for an international governance system that is included in the decision-making and implementation process.

4. (SBU) On the CCIT, Bhattacharjee re-iterated that India wanted the CCIT to come to a vote, though he understood that the United States had been hesitant. Since the Mumbai terrorist attacks, the Indian media and people had been asking the government about what had been done since the CCIT was introduced in 1996, according to Bhattacharjee. India had been willing to share information with the UNSC and the 1267 Committee, but now "we want a legal framework." He said that this issue was even more important to them than a permanent seat on the UNSC.

5. (SBU) Bhattacharjee said that India currently prefers the Coordinator's 2002 operative text. Given the Organization of the Islamic Conference's objections to the Coordinator's 2002 text, in an effort to bring CCIT negotiations to a conclusion, the Indians have proposed adding new preambular language lifted from the Global Counterterrorism Strategy and the Nuclear Terrorism Convention. Bhattacharjee believed this compromise to be a good one.

6. (SBU) Bhattacharjee mentioned also that he had heard that the United States actually supported the 2007 compromise text proposed by Greece, which was of some concern to him. A/S Brimmer expressed sympathy with India's concerns about the CCIT and said that she would check on whether or not the United States had made any positive statements about the 2007 text. ACTION REQUEST: Embassy New Delhi is requested to convey that L/LEI has since confirmed that the United States has never accepted or spoken favorably about the 2007 text. We agree with the Indian's preference for the 2002 text and can support their approach to add in preambular language drawn from previously accepted text, although we would prefer only a reference to the Global Counterterrorism Strategy in the preamble, and not a direct quote that would include language regarding self-determination. END ACTION REQUEST.

7. Bhattacharjee also discussed India's long history in

peacekeeping operations. India has collected a great deal of best practices and experiences, including civilians working in stabilization efforts, and he was willing to share these with us. He would like to resurrect a bilateral exchange on this topic, suggesting that the next meeting could take place in New Delhi, mentioned that the methodology of reimbursement and other urgent peacekeeping issues need to be sorted out.

18. A/S Brimmer also raised the U.S.-Egypt freedom of expression resolution in the UN Human Rights Council. Bhattacharjee responded that as a democracy, India had no objections and that he "hoped" that the Indian delegation in Geneva was being supportive. Bhattacharjee saw a "new beginning" in and chance to strengthen the U.S.-India relationship. He said that he maintained close contact with the Political Section at Embassy New Delhi, and encouraged frequent dialogue even on areas where we have divergent views, such as the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. He said that as a member of the G-77, India "takes a certain view," but was willing to re-consider its views in order to be the voice of moderation in multilateral affairs.

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